

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A sheet protector comprising:  
a sheet of material folded about a fold line to form a front panel and a back panel each having a top edge, a bottom edge, a pair of side edges, the fold line defining one of the pairs of side edges of the panels;  
the panels being welded together at:  
a bottom weld line located along the bottom edges;  
an outer weld line located along the side edges opposite the fold line;  
an inner weld line located in a spaced relationship from the outer weld line, such that a margin is defined between the outer and inner weld lines;  
the fold line, the bottom weld line, and the inner line defining between the panels a pocket with an opening along the top edges of the panels;  
the inner weld line extending to a location that is short of the top edges of the panels, such that the opening of the pocket extends into the margin.
2. The sheet protector of claim 1 wherein the outer weld line extends to a location that is short of the top edges of the panels, such that the opening of the pocket extends through the margin.
3. The sheet protector of claim 1 wherein the panels are welded together along a margin weld line extending from the inner weld line to the outer weld line.
4. The sheet protector of claim 3 wherein the margin weld line intersects the outer weld line at or near a top margin corner of the panels.
5. The sheet protector of claim 3 wherein the margin weld line intersects the outer weld line at a location spaced from the top edges of the panels.
6. The sheet protector of claim 3 wherein the margin weld line intersects the outer weld line at a location at least about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch from the top edges of the panels.

7. The sheet protector of claim 3 wherein the margin weld line extends at an angle outwardly from the inner weld line.
8. The sheet protector of claim 1 wherein the panels have a notch disposed at a top margin corner thereof.
9. The sheet protector of claim 8 wherein a size of the notch in the front panel is smaller than the size of the notch in the back panel.
10. The sheet protector of claim 8 wherein the panels include a tab formed at the notch.
11. The sheet protector of claim 1 further comprising a reinforcing strip disposed in the margin between the panels.
12. The sheet protector of claim 11 wherein the panels have a notch disposed at a top margin corner thereof, such that a top end of the strip is angled complementarily with the notch; the top end of the strip being attached to one of the panels.
13. The sheet protector of claim 1 further comprising one or more binder holes formed through the margin.
14. The sheet protector of claim 1 wherein the opening has a width that is at least about 2% greater than a width of the pocket.
15. A sheet protector comprising:
  - a front panel and a back panel attached together to form:
    - a pocket having an opening extending along one side thereof; and
    - a margin extending along another side of the pocket and substantially orthogonal to the opening;
  - the opening extending into the margin such that a width of the opening is greater than a width of the pocket.

**16.** The sheet protector of claim **15** wherein the panels being welded together at:  
a bottom weld line located along bottom edges of the panels;  
an outer weld line located along one set of side edges of the panels; and  
an inner weld line located in a spaced relationship from the outer weld line, such that the margin is defined between the outer and inner weld lines;  
the inner weld line extending to a location that is short of the top edges of the panels.

**17.** The sheet protector of claim **15** wherein the inner weld line extends to a location that is at least about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch from the top edges of the panels.

**18.** A sheet protector comprising:  
a pocket having a width;  
a margin extending along one side of the pocket; and  
an opening having a width and extending along another side of the pocket and into the margin such that the width of the opening is greater than the width of the pocket.

**19.** The sheet protector of claim **18** wherein the opening extends completely through the margin.

**20.** The sheet protector of claim **18** wherein the width of the opening is at least about 2% greater than the width of the pocket.